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From: bounce-249165-5580300@listserv.state.ma.us on behalf of Skahen, Mary (EHS) <Mary.Skahen@state.ma.us>
Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2010 1:25 PM
To: Corbett, Kate (DPH)
Subject: A Message from Secretary Bigby

Dear EOHHS Staff,

As you know, Governor Patrick issued his FY11 budget recommendations just a short time ago at the State House (www.mass.gov/governor). This balanced budget reflects the thoughtful, strong, and steady leadership Governor Patrick has consistently provided to the people of Massachusetts during very challenging economic times. His budget is fiscally responsible, reflects a commitment to reforms and efficiencies that will save taxpayer dollars and improve government performance, and preserves needed investments. Overall, the Governor's FY11 budget recommends total state spending of \$28.213 billion, which is \$825 million (3%) above estimated FY10 spending.

We share a deep commitment to ensuring the availability of quality services and supports for diverse populations and communities across the Commonwealth. In preparing this budget, the Governor faced a \$2.7 billion deficit. Representing roughly half of the state budget, EOHHS faced a proportionate reduction of \$1.5 billion. However, recognizing the vital services and supports we offer to consumers across the Commonwealth, the Governor ultimately recommended \$14.5 billion in spending for EOHHS and its agencies – which is an \$834 million (6.1%) *increase* over the FY10 GAA budget—or a \$569 million increase from FY10 projected spending.

In general, agencies maintain their share of the overall Secretariat budget, and key services in many of our agencies have been protected. Maintaining his commitment to health care reform, the Governor increased overall MassHealth spending by 6.5% to keep pace with growing enrollment and increased funding for the Children's Behavioral Health Initiative; the budget also preserves coverage for MassHealth members and maintains nursing home and community health center provider rates. The Governor has also preserved funding for many key services and supports, including: services for veterans and elders; WIC; cash assistance benefits for more than 50,000 TAFDC households and 20,000 EAEDC households; domestic violence services for DTA clients; funding for DTA case managers and DCF social workers; supports for the most vulnerable people with disabilities who are "Turning 22;" services for DYS-committed youth; and DMH Clubhouses and Community Based Flexible Supports. House 2 also increased funding for DPH's tobacco control efforts.

Of course, because of the current economic conditions, we have had to make some hard choices in developing a budget that is balanced and responsible. I understand that the reductions we have to make will be difficult. In particular, we have had to restructure dental services for non-disabled adult MassHealth members and reduce funding for community- and state-operated residential services and day/work programs for some DDS clients; certain hospital payments; employment services for DTA and MRC clients; home care assistance services for elders and MRC clients; and voluntary DCF services. Despite these and other difficult reductions, we are committed to developing strategies and initiatives that will help mitigate the impact these reductions will have on the people we serve. We look forward to working with you to implement these efforts.

You work hard each and every day to provide our consumers with quality services and supports, and I thank you for your ongoing commitment to the diverse populations and communities we serve. I look forward to continuing our work together to ensure that our consumers have access to the services and supports they need during these difficult financial times.

Sincerely,

JudyAnn Bigby, M.D.

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